1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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The small letters are for women; the larger type designates men. The figure shows that: (1) ego is all the male terms; (2) he is in direct relation to every female term; and (3) he is only indirectly concerned with the reciprocal relations of women. The reverse of these statements is true if ego is a woman.

Ego, as an expression of only one part—the kinship organization—of Murngin culture, is an extremely complex social personality. We must remember that he is a member of a tribe, a clan, and moiety; of a totemic system; of an economic group; of a system of mythology, ceremony and belief; and of many other mechanisms.

Each individual feels it is his right rather than his duty to keep his part of the system working; hence the proper functioning of the whole. A proper marriage is preferred because a Murngin man and woman usually feel that they have a right to each other, since their relationship has destined them to marriage. This is true of all the behavior of all the personalities in the system.

Nevertheless, wrong marriages occur (see also pages 26, 27). The Murngin have arranged a rather simple scheme to make the new marriage fit into the general kinship system and adjust the relationships of the offspring to other members of the society.

If one of ego's own family marries wrong, the relationship term of the woman this person married is changed so that it fits what she would be called were she the proper galle of ego's relative. Thus, when ego's own galle is taken by bapa, the former no longer calls her galle, but aendi. This is true throughout. When natchiwalker marries ego's mokul instead of ego's momelker, ego no longer calls the woman mokul, but momelker; yet the correct term for the woman is known, as will be seen presently.

When children are born from a wrong marriage, the father calls them by the terms all other parents give their children (gatu). But everyone else calls the children by the term used if the mother had married normally. To use the native expression, "The father is thrown away."[13] There is only one exception: if a father marries ego's galle, ego would not call the children gatu, but wawa and yeppa. In all other cases the rule would hold; if ego's father married ego's momelker, ego would call the offspring marelker and mokul, and not brother and sister. There are recorded cases of this. When natchiwalker marries

[13] Radcliffe-Brown, A. R., "Three Tribes of Western Australia," Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. *Journal*, London, 1913, Vol. XLIII, pages 143-194.

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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tensity of their relationship, gauged by the degree of totemic inheritance. But these groups are certainly not tribes.[9]

The clan, or in practice its occupational group, the horde (*vide infra* p. 12), is the most important unit of social life in Arnhem Land. The clan is the territorial or land-owning group, but the horde is the war-making group, and each horde is to a large extent independent and self-governing. Anything approaching kingship or chieftainship is unknown in Arnhem Land. Law, order and discipline is laid down by tradition. It is defined in the mythology, and in the sagas of the culture heroes, and is maintained by public opinion, enforced by the old men, who act as custodians of the heritage of the clan. The authority of the old men is backed, in turn, by the *wäŋärr*, the totemic ancestors themselves, whose edicts are enforced by the threat of supernatural sanctions.

There is no individual ownership of land. Land ownership is vested in the clan as the hereditary group, and as this is a *patrilineal*[10] society, a man is born into his father's clan and has hunting rights over the territory of his own clan and generally over that of several others, particularly that

[9] The arbitrary use of the term *Murngin*, "tribe", for the people of Eastern Arnhem Land, which was introduced by Professor W. Lloyd Warner (*A Black Civilisation*; New York and London, 1937) is particularly unfortunate, for as was pointed out (footnote 5) east of Cape Stewart in North Central Arnhem Land tribal organisation is conspicuous by its absence from the intricate social organisation of the area, although it appears again at Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and occurs along the Roper River. The word *murngin* has nothing to do with social organisation, and is in no sense the name of a "tribe".

[10] Descent, among the aborigines, in family, clan and certain other hereditary groups, is reckoned either in the male line, i.e. through the father, in which case it is called *patrilineal*, or through the mother, when it is called *matrilineal*.

if she does so, is regarded as having compromised herself into giving her daughter to the youth whose *kälŋboi* food she has eaten, although she knows that a fight must follow when the man to whom the girl rightfully belongs learns what has happened. Having accepted the *kälŋboi* food the woman also makes a ceremonial presentation of food which she gives to her *korroŋ* (son-in-law), who however does not eat it himself but distributes it to certain other relatives, defined by custom.

262
431
784
584
606

This example will show the strength of the urge to reciprocate, to discharge an obligation, and the extent to which it dominates the behaviour of these people, as well as its importance as a driving force in social and in economic activities, in which it furnishes one of the most important incentives to work.

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183
431
461

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943) 1949
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to the impact of Indonesian culture. The giving and exchange of gifts, of *gerri*, is an important accompaniment of much of the ritual that takes place in Arnhem Land and is an integral part of the behaviour which is obligatory between relatives of certain orders within the kinship system. A number of special relationships, of which one, *tjukarŋo*, is mentioned on page 75, are also characterised by the exchange of possessions.

And again, the fact must be stressed that the ceremonial exchange cycle is not merely a matter of exchange or barter, although the economic exchange is a vital accompaniment, but that a man having once established a place in the *kumur märndu* relationship, must reciprocate with the appropriate *gerri*. As one of my informants said (page 79), "*Must* I give *wetj*"—"I *must* reciprocate." And again, when he is offered a gift, a man cannot refuse it—he *must* accept it—and after holding it for the period permitted by custom, pass it on to one of his partners. When people of an inland clan, who are partners in the *kumur djalk* and *kumur kürin* directions, brought big ceremonial presentations of flint spear heads, boomerangs, forehead fillets (*küllämba*) and large ceremonial hair belts and other *gerri*, to their exchange partners in *kumur muadäk* the people would have no choice. They would be obliged to accept the *gerri* brought by the visitors and to reciprocate. The *gerri* appropriate to each quarter are defined by tradition, and again, it was stated that tradition lays down the rule that *gerri* from one *kumur* may not return to the quarter in which they originated. The practical effect of this custom would be to make it difficult for the people of the coast to have a monopoly of iron implements, such as axes, knives, iron spear heads, wire for fish spears, even if they wished to do so. It would be impossible for them to possess these without the knowledge

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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and on the shore after dark, the horde told me about it in their own graphic fashion. Months previously, Burramai had legally married a certain woman. But she had a grown-up daughter and the trouble started when he also took this 'step-daughter' into his camp, knowing full well that she was not of his marriage-division and that tribally she was regarded as being as much his daughter as one of his own flesh and blood.

It was not long before this scandal of incest was known to all the hordes, and Murrkundi, a close relative of the women, came down through the islands looking for Burramai, and eventually found him by his fire near Melville Bay. Murrkundi wasted no time in taking up the argument: 'How many wives do you want? Isn't it enough that you have a legal wife from your own marriage-division? Or do you want women from other men's divisions as well?' Burramai was adamant: 'Yes, I want all the women I can get. All your talk about tabus and legal marriage is rubbish. I have had my step-daughter for many moons and no harm has come to me—I'm not dead yet.'

Murrkundi seemed to give way before this blasphemous outburst, and merely asked to be taken to see the women who were also his relatives; for in Arnhem Land, nomads are tribally related over distances of several hundred miles. When they had gone some distance Murrkundi feigned thirst, so his guide took him to a pool in a mountain stream, but he held back so that Burramai might drink first. Kneeling down to drink, Burramai saw in the clear water the reflection of Murrkundi fitting a spear to his spear-thrower with the obvious intention of killing him, so without drinking he rose quickly and wiped his lips, and said: 'That is good water. It has made me strong again. You have a drink now.'

Murrkundi drank in safety, for Burramai remembered that the water carried reflections and refrained from spearing the man. But once they were out of the stream, he told